

**Salmonid Coalition**  
General Meeting  
June 11, 2007  
**Draft Document**

**Item 1.: Introductions**

Adina Merenlender, Al Cadd, Amy Bolton, Amy Mai, Brenda Adelman, Bill Cox, Bob Anderson, Bob Burke, Bob Clemens, Brian Johnson, Carolyn Wasem, Charlie Carson, Claire Anderson, Colleen Fernald, Dave Lewis, Derek Aikman, Dick Butler, Gregg Horton, Kate Simons, Keenan Foster, Lex McCorvey, Mike Martini, Nick Frey, Pete Dayton, Randy Poole and Tim Smith

**Item 2: Dr. Update on Stream Assessments**

In the last five months Dr. Horton has been able to survey 10 of the total 15 streams. Two more of the remaining five streams are scheduled to be surveyed this week and the next. All of the surveys should be completed by the third week of June, which would allow Dr. Horton two months to organize his data for presentation to the Coalition.

Dr. Horton handed out an example of the work he has done so far. The draft charts showed some of the results from his survey of Wine Creek. These charts, which are a representation of what Dr. Horton is developing for all 15 streams, rates on a scale from 0 (poor) to 5 (good) four of the six criteria that the Coalition is focusing on in its recovery efforts. These include riparian vegetation, substrate sedimentation, channel complexity, and artificial passage barriers. Because of time restraints, only four of the six fundamental habitat factors were analyzed for these charts.

DFG surveyed these streams over the last ten or so years, and defined reaches as geomorphic characteristics of the stream. Dr. Horton is using DFG protocols when examining these streams. However, there are some things that DFG did not assess, or which may have changed drastically in the last ten years (i.e., barriers). At this point, Dr. Horton is not looking too much at the DFG data, but later he will compare to DFG data to what he has collected.

The cooperation of the private property owners with this survey has been incredible. Dr. Horton thanks all of those who helped him gain access to the private lands.

**Item 3:Update on Modeling and Survey Efforts**

Dr. Merenlender has just returned from D.C., where she was reporting to the EPA on her work. EPA and USDA staffs are really excited about the potential of small off-stream reservoir sites, because it is becoming much more difficult to establish larger dams.

USDA has called for watershed science research, but has not received many proposals for research like Dr. Merenlender and Dr. Deitch' work, which looks at quantity issues. EPA

and USDA are looking for specifics on flows, and would like specifics on how low flows can get before they damages fish habitat. This type of information is not really available because the answer is fuzzier than the Feds would like. Dr. Merenlender was able to talk about getting funding for projects in California.

Dr. Merenlender is continuing to monitor stream flows, and would like access to more sites. She put together a set of maps for Alexander and Dry Creek Valleys, and asked the Coalition members in attendance to look at them and adviser her on which property owners may be approachable, and would allow flow-monitoring gauges on their land.

### **Item 3: Update on Enforcement Hearings at State Water Board**

On June 19<sup>th</sup> there will be a workshop on enforcement at the State Water Board.

Conversation with senior staff has revealed that they are looking for direction from the Board on enforcement actions. There are no clear priorities on which violations are worthy of strict enforcement and which problems are not worth pursuing. On the Board website there are about 30 comments that have been filed on the subject of enforcement for next week's enforcement workshop. The Board already has plenty of authority to enforce water laws, but new legislation may be needed to clarify what the priorities are.

Mr. Anderson recalled that in 1994 he commented to the Board that this problem was like a car accident on the freeway: you have to do more than just deal with the cars at the front of the accident; you have to deal with all of the cars crowded behind them. His advice 13 years ago was that the Board needed to deal with the hundreds of pending applications as well as worry about violators.

It was recommended that in terms of the relationship between enforcement and restoration, the Board should try to encourage going above and beyond the requirements by creating incentives for better performance.

### **Item 3: Corps of Engineers - Watershed Assessment Model**

The Corps is trying to complete a computerized watershed assessment model, which is currently close to completion. The Army Corps is the Agency responsible for coordinating this effort.

All of the information that currently exists on the Russian River has been input into this program. When it is complete, DVD copies should be made available for us to examine. The program should allow computerized surveys of sub-watersheds. Users would be able to see if it is in good condition or not and identify potential problems.

### **Item 4: Geomorphology**

There is an RFQ that will be going out any day now, with a 30-day response period to follow. There is a potential to alter the geomorphology in Dry Creek to change the flows.

We hope to include members of the Salmonid Coalition in the consulting process and include someone in the Coalition to consult with us by September.

#### **Item 5: Update on Flow EIR Process**

One EIR is exploring the options for continued uses of Coyote Dam. There are some problems that exist around the Dam and the integrity of its structure. SCWA is trying to sign an agreement with the Army Corps to share 50% of the cost of the project. The State Water Board will also have to be involved and will have the final say on approval. It will be at least three years before the final EIR is available for release.

SCWA acknowledged that all of the pieces of Dr. Merenlender and Dr. Horton's work will be very helpful in this process, and that various state agencies help would also be appreciated.

To aim for having a draft in 3 years is a very aggressive schedule and funding will have a great deal to do with progress. A rough cost estimate will probably be available in 18-24 months with the release of the draft EIR.

#### **Item 6: Update on Lake Mendocino**

The reservoirs have been holding flat for the last few weeks in Mendocino, though there was some difficulty this weekend when substantial changes had to be made because flows were low in Hopland.

By July the State Water Board should have some direction for conservation actions for the Ag community that has come to the table with an irrigation analysis.

#### **Item 7: Update on RWEP**

Two weeks ago the Regional Ground and Surface Water Enhancement Program (RWEP) was added to the Conservation Title of the 2007 Farm Bill in the House, and there are currently good signs pointing to the Senate committee doing the same. However, the legislation has a few flaws in it now, which may mean that more projects that will be eligible for the money designated for RWEP.

Our language was recently attached to the Conservation title in the Farm Bill. When that happened, some of the findings were omitted; including a provision that the projects funded under RWEP should be watershed-based. We are fairly confident that in the next few days we will be able to reinstate the integrity of the RWEP in the Farm Bill.

The legislation is still sitting at \$100 million annually to be distributed to projects such as ours.

The point was made that several things are in the Farm Bill just because we asked for it, and no other reason, and that we should be proud that we made the Bill at all.

**Next meetings:**

*Agricultural Subcommittee:* June 25<sup>th</sup>, 10am. SCWGA.

*Urban Subcommittee:* June 27<sup>th</sup>